

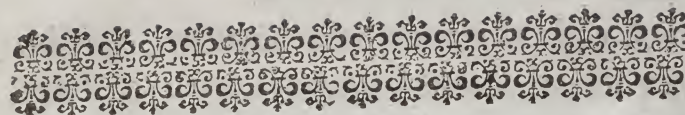
TO THE
ROYAL SOCIETY.



After my *Address* to our Great Founder and Patron, I could not but think my self oblig'd, in consideration of those many *Engagements* you have laid upon me, to offer these my poor *Labours* to this MOST ILLUSTRIOUS ASSEMBLY. YOU have been pleas'd formerly to accept of these rude *Draughts*. I have since added to them some *Descriptions*, and some *Conjectures* of my own. And therefore, together with YOUR *Acceptance*, I must also beg YOUR *pardon*. The Rules YOU have prescrib'd YOUR selves in YOUR Philosophical Progress do seem the best that have ever yet been practis'd. And particularly that of avoiding *Dogmatizing*, and the *espousal* of any *Hypothesis* not sufficiently grounded and confirm'd by *Experiments*. This way seems the most excellent, and may preserve both *Philosophy* and *Natural History* from its former *Corruptions*. In saying which, I may seem to condemn my own Course in this Treatise; in which there may perhaps be some *Expressions*, which may seem more *positive* then YOUR *Prescriptions* will permit: And though I desire to have them understood only as *Conjectures* and *Quæries* (which YOUR Method does not altogether disallow) yet if even in those I have exceeded, 'tis fit that I should declare, that it was not done by YOUR *Directions*. For it is most unreasonable, that YOU should undergo the *imputation* of the faults of my *Conjectures*, seeing YOU can receive so small advantage of reputation by the *sleight Observations* of

YOUR most humble and
most faithful Servant

ROBERT HOOKE.



THE
PREFACE



It is the great prerogative of Man, as a Creature, that we are not only to be governed by the works of Nature, or barely to follow them, but we have also the power of reasoning, comparing, altering, assisting them to various uses. And as this is the peculiar privilege of Nature in general, so is it capable of being so far advanced by the works of Art, and Experience, as to make some Men exceed the power of Nature, by their Observations, and Deductions, almost as much as they do by the addition of such artificial Instruments and methods. In some manner, a reparation made for the mischiefs, which mankind has drawn upon it self, by negligence, and in some wilful and superstitious deserting the Prescripts and Directions, whereby every man, both from a deriv'd corruption of Nature, and from his breeding and converse with men, is liable to slip into all sorts of errors.

The only way which now remains for us to recover those former perfections, seems to be, by rectifying the faculties of Sense, the Memory, and Reason, since upon the evicence of the integrity, and the right correspondence of all these, by which our actions are to be guided, is to be renewed. And the command over things is to be establish'd.

It is therefore most worthy of our consideration, to consider several defects, that so we may the better understand the nature of them, and by what assistances we may enlarge their power, and improve them in performing their particular duties.

As for the actions of our Senses, we cannot but ob-